

CHAPTER 173-62 WAC

MOTOR VEHICLE NOISE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

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WAC

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WAC 173-62-010 Authority and purpose.

- (1) Under RCW 70.107.030 (5) of the Noise Control Act of 1974 (chapter 183, Laws of 1974), the legislature directed the department of ecology, in exercising rule-making authority to give first priority to the adoption of motor vehicle noise performance standards. The purpose of this chapter is to carry out that legislative directive through the adoption of noise emission standards for new motor vehicles and noise emission standards for the operation of motor vehicles on public highways.
- (2) Local needs. The standards established in this chapter provide several methods of evaluating motor vehicle noise levels. Nothing in these rules is meant to require enforcement agencies or local governments to adopt or use every standard in this chapter to determine a violation. Specific local needs shall dictate the standard(s) which may be adopted or used.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.107 RCW. 80-14-041 (Order DE 80-29), § 173-62-010 , filed 9/30/80; Order DE 74-33, § 173-62-010 , filed 1/30/75, effective 7/1/75.]

WAC 173-62-020 Definitions. As used in this chapter:

- (1) “dBA” means the sound level in decibels measured using the “A” weighting network on a sound level meter as specified in the American National Standard Specification for Sound Level Meters S1.4-1971. A decibel is a unit of sound, based on a logarithmic scale, of the ratio of the magnitude of a particular sound pressure to a standard reference pressure of 20 micropascals;
- (2) “Department” means the department of ecology;
- (3) “Director” means director of the department of ecology;
- (4) “Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR)” means the value specified by the manufacturer as the loaded weight of a single vehicle;
- (5) “In-use” motor vehicle is any motor vehicle which is used on a public highway, except farm vehicles as defined under RCW 46.04.181 ;
- (6) “Motor vehicle” means any vehicle which is self-propelled, used primarily for transporting persons or property upon public highways and required to be licensed under RCW 46.16.010 (aircraft, water craft and vehicles used exclusively on stationary rails or tracks are not motor vehicles as that term is used herein);

- (7) “Motorcycle” means any motor vehicle having a saddle for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, except farm tractors;
- (8) “Muffler” means a device consisting of a series of chambers or other mechanical designs for the purpose of receiving exhaust gas from an internal combustion engine and effective in reducing noise to comply with the standards of this chapter;
- (9) “New motor vehicle” means a motor vehicle manufactured after December 31, 1975, whose equitable or legal title has never been transferred to a person who, in good faith, purchases the new motor vehicle for purposes other than resale;
- (10) “Off-highway vehicle” means any self-propelled vehicle not used primarily for transporting persons or property upon public highways nor required to be licensed under RCW 46.16.010 ;
- (11) “Person” means any individual, corporation, partnership, association, governmental body, state agency or other entity whatsoever;
- (12) “Public highway” means the entire width between the boundary lines of every way publicly maintained by the department of highways or any county or city when any part thereof is generally open to the use of the public for purposes of vehicular travel as a matter of right;
- (13) “Sound level” means a weighted sound pressure level measured by use of a sound level meter using the “A” weighting network and reported as dBA.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.107 RCW. 80–14–041 (Order DE 80–29), § 173–62–020 , filed 9/30/80; Order DE 75–17, § 173–62–020 , filed 8/11/75; Order DE 74–33, § 173–62–020 , filed 1/30/75, effective 7/1/75.]

WAC 173–62–030 Standards.

- (1) No person shall operate any motor vehicle or any combination of such vehicles upon any public highway under any conditions of grade, load, acceleration or deceleration in such a manner as to exceed the maximum permissible sound levels for the category of vehicle in Table I, as measured at a distance of 50 feet (15.2 meters) from the center of the lane of travel within the speed limits specified, under procedures established by the state commission on equipment in chapter 204-56 WAC, “procedures for measuring motor vehicle sound levels.”

Table I
IN-USE MOTOR VEHICLE NOISE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS
Measured @ 50 feet (15.2 meters)

Vehicle Category (type)	Effective Date	Maximum Sound Level, dBA Speed Zones		
		45 mph (72 kph) or less	Over 45 mph (72 kph)	Stationary Test
Motorcycles	July 1, 1980	78	82	N/A
Automobiles, light trucks and all other motor vehicles 10,000 pounds (4536 kg) GVWR or less	July 1, 1980	72	78	N/A
		35 mph (56 kph) or less	Over 35 mph (56 kph)	
All motor vehicles over 10,000 pounds (4536 kg) GVWR	June 1, 1977	86	90	86
	1986 and after	Reserved	Reserved	Reserved

- (2) Every motor vehicle operated upon the public highways shall at all times be equipped with an exhaust system and a muffler in good working order and constant operation to prevent excessive or unusual noise.
- (3) No person shall operate a motor vehicle in such a manner as to cause or allow to be emitted squealing, screeching or other such noise from the tires in contact with the ground because of rapid acceleration or excessive speed around corners or other such reason, except that noise resulting from emergency braking to avoid imminent danger shall be exempt from this provision.
- (4) No person shall operate any motor vehicle upon any public highway if the vehicle exhaust system exceeds the maximum permissible sound levels of Table II for the category and year of vehicle, as measured at a distance of twenty inches (0.5 meter) from the exhaust outlet under procedures established by the state commission on equipment in chapter 204-56 WAC, "procedures for measuring motor vehicle sound levels."
- (5) No person shall sell or offer for sale a new motor vehicle except an off-highway vehicle, which produces a maximum noise exceeding the noise levels in Table III at a distance of 50 feet (15.2 meters) under acceleration test procedures established by the state commission on equipment in chapter 204-56 WAC, "procedures for measuring motor vehicle sound levels."

Table II
IN-USE MOTOR VEHICLE EXHAUST SYSTEM NOISE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS
Measured @ 20 inches (0.5 meter)

Vehicle Category Maximum Sound (type)	Model Year	Level, dBA
Motorcycles	before 1986 1986 and after	99 (reserved)
Automobiles, light trucks and all other motor vehicles 10,000 pounds (4536 kg) GVWR or less	before 1986 1986 and after	95 (reserved)

Table III
MAXIMUM SOUND LEVELS FOR NEW MOTOR VEHICLES
Measured @ 50 feet (15.2 meters)

Vehicle Category Level, (type)	Date of Manufacture	Maximum Sound dBA
Any motor vehicle over 10,000 pounds (4536 kg) GVWR excluding buses	before January 1, 1978 after January 1, 1978 after January 1, 1982	86 83 80
All buses over 10,000 pounds (4536 kg) GVWR	after January 1, 1980 after January 1, 1983 after January 1, 1986	85 83 80
Motorcycles	after January 1, 1976 after January 1, 1986	83 80
Automobiles, light trucks and all other motor vehicles 10,000 pounds (4536 kg) GVWR or less	after January 1, 1976	80

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.107 RCW. 80-14-041 (Order DE 80-29), § 173-62-030 , filed 9/30/80; Order DE 77-2, § 173-62-030 , filed 6/1/77; Order DE 75-17, § 173-62-030, filed 8/11/75; Order DE 74-33, § 173-62-030 , filed 1/30/75, effective 7/1/75.]

WAC 173-62-040 Exemptions. The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to noise caused by auxiliary equipment on motor vehicles used for highway maintenance, nor to noise caused in the performance of emergency work for the immediate safety, health or welfare of the community or of individuals of the community, or to restore property to a safe condition following a public calamity.

[Order DE 75-17, § 173-62-040 , filed 8/11/75; Order DE 74-33, § 173-62-040 , filed 1/30/75, effective 7/1/75.]

WAC 173-62-050 Implementation schedules.

- (1) Conditions of issuance. The department may approve and issue to any person, an implementation schedule for meeting any particular requirement of this chapter, if it finds that immediate compliance with such requirement cannot be achieved because of conditions beyond the control of such person or because of special circumstances rendering immediate compliance unreasonable in light of economic or physical factors or because of the nonavailability of feasible technology or control methods.
- (2) Requesting procedure. Implementation schedules shall be issued only upon application in writing to the department. Such application shall state in a concise manner the facts to show cause why such schedule should be approved. Any aggrieved person may appeal the department's decision on an application to the pollution control hearings board pursuant to chapter 43.21B RCW.

[Order DE 74-33, § 173-62-050 , filed 1/30/75, effective 7/1/75.]

WAC 173-62-060 Enforcement.

- (1) Measurements shall be made with a sound level meter meeting Type 1, S1A, 2 or S2A requirements as specified in the American National Standards Specifications for Sound Level Meters S1.4-1971 as required under measurement procedures established in chapter 204-56 WAC, "procedures for measuring motor vehicle sound levels."
- (2) Violation of any in-use motor vehicle noise standard set forth in this chapter shall be a traffic infraction, enforced by such authorities and in such manner as violations of chapter 46.37 RCW.
- (3) Law enforcement personnel selected to measure vehicle sound levels shall have received training in the techniques of sound measurement and the operation of sound measuring instruments.
- (4) Any enforcement officer who by use of the initial inspection procedures of chapter 204-56 WAC suspects that a motor vehicle may be in violation of the standards of this chapter may require the operator to have the vehicle presented for sound level measurement. Measurements of a motor vehicle may be performed at off-road sites to determine compliance with the in-use standards.
- (5) Any operator who fails to comply with the directive to present the vehicle to a sound level measurement test shall be in violation of this chapter.

- (6) Any seller, importer, or manufacturer who sells or offers for sale a motor vehicle which violates the standards in WAC 173-62-030 shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed one hundred dollars as established in RCW 70.107.050 . Every motor vehicle sold or offered for sale shall constitute a separate violation.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.107 RCW. 80-14-041 (Order DE 80-29), § 173-62-060 , filed 9/30/80; Order DE 74-33, § 173-62-060 , filed 1/30/75, effective 7/1/75.]

WAC 173-62-070 Effective date. This chapter shall become effective July 1, 1975.

[Order DE 74-33, § 173-62-070 , filed 1/30/75, effective 7/1/75.]